

Christian Secretary.

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"WHAT THOU SEEST, WRITE—AND SEND UNTO THE—CHURCHES"

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The Christian Secretary

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TERMS.

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For the Christian Secretary.

The Child's Dream.

BY HOWARD.

"Is the child dead?" 2d Sam. 12: 19.

Your loved one is not dead—he sleeps,
And dreams amid his slumbers.
That angel music o'er him sweeps
In sweet, seraphic numbers.

His eyes are closed, but O the sight
That opens on his vision,
Wings his pure spirit with delight—
He dreams it is Elysium.

He dreams he sees a cherub throng
Before his Saviour bending;
And that himself in their sweet song,
His own sweet voice is blending.

His dreams were once of earthly bliss,
Purest to mortals given;
But they were all unlike to this,
For now he dreams of heaven.

So blest is he in this sweet dream,
That it would ne'er awake him,
Even if his mother called his name,
And in her arms did take him.

His was a soul too pure for earth—
Clay long enough detained;
'Twas heaven first gave that spirit birth,
And heaven has now regained it.

Hartford, April 6, 1844.

At the recent meeting of the ministers of
Litchfield County, the following essay was read.

ESSAY.

In taking a view of the condition of the churches in this and the adjoining states, we are constrained to say that God hath done great things for us, for which we ought to rejoice with thankfulness of heart. The last year has seemed to be a year of the right hand of the Most High. Most of the churches have been quickened, and sinners have been hopefully converted and added to the number, and they are now rejoicing in the goodness of God. But still there are more or less churches in almost, or quite, every county, that think themselves too feeble to sustain the stated ministry of the word and ordinances of the Gospel, and when some of these churches have been revived and increased by additions, they have soon relapsed to their former coldness and weakness.

Query: What is the cause of, and the remedy for these evils? We reply:

1. One cause of these evils may be owing to the want of ministers deeply imbued with the Holy Spirit, in the churches that are able to sustain a pastor.

The influence of such a ministry would be felt abroad as well as at home. How many pastors seldom go out of their own town, except to a large public meeting, or on a pleasure visit to their friends, unless it is now and then to exchange with other ministers. Their excuse is, that their labors are all needed at home. This may be the case sometimes, but is it all the time? We know that pastors can always find employ at home, with their own dear people. But when the faithful laborer realizes that sinners in his own county are perishing for want of knowledge, and churches languishing for want of some one to break to them the bread of life, can he not, and will he not find time to visit those destitute regions, if not on the Lord's day, at least on other days, occasionally; and spend four or five days in a week going from house to house, and pray, exhort, warn and instruct those who have ears to hear, and then, if he can get the people together, preach Christ to them in the evening. We think that no Christian church will object to this being done by their pastor, four or five times in a year, and they ought not to object to his staying over the Sabbath, when circumstances require it. It appears to us that the want of such spirited, heavenly-minded laborers is one cause of the evils alluded to, and that if every pastor would thus faithfully extend his influence among the destitute churches, it would be instrumental of awakening them to duty and of increasing their strength, by the blessing of God on their labors; but while this is neglected, the feeble churches are discouraged, and more enfeebled.

2. The want of holy, persevering effort is a cause of there being so many feeble churches in our country.
We have no reason to expect prosperity in the pursuit of any object, without using suitable means to obtain it. We may earnestly desire the accomplishment of an object without labor, but the soul of the sluggard desireth and hath nothing.—The diligent hand maketh rich. Leanness of soul is the natural effect of desire without effort. It may be said that Christians depend entirely upon God for the accomplishment of their object. This is true; but do they not as much depend on him for their yearly harvest, yet they do not expect it without diligently using means to obtain it. We do believe that, in general, the want of holy, persevering effort in humble dependence upon God for success, is followed by a famine for

want of the bread and the water of life, and we generally see that those churches which make the most suitable effort are the most prosperous. It is therefore evident that the evils complained of accompany the want of holy, persevering effort. Now, let us visit the languishing churches and inquire of some of the members whether they have a prayer meeting every Sabbath, when destitute of preaching. Not generally; would be the answer. Do you have a stated prayer meeting every week? No. How often do you have them? Very seldom; we are unable to get the people to attend a prayer meeting; we are a poor, feeble band of brethren. Do you pray in your families daily? Why, there may be a few that do, but this duty is too much neglected among us. Do you frequently warn the impenitent? Why, there is not much of this done among us; we are too cold and indifferent. How often do you have preaching? Why, not often, we are so poor we can't pay for it. Yes, and so you will remain till you make more holy effort. We think that the remedy for all this is obvious.

Let the members of these churches covenant together to pray daily in their families; to have preaching when they can on the Sabbath, and when they cannot procure preaching on the Sabbath, have a prayer meeting; to sustain a prayer meeting at least once a week between the Sabbaths; to warn sinners as they have opportunity, and endeavor to provoke each other to love and good works. Let them faithfully and perseveringly pursue this course, and we believe they will soon rise above their embarrassments, and become comparatively a strong, efficient community by the blessing of God on their efforts, they will praise God for his goodness.

3. The want of liberality tends to poverty and consequent weakness in the churches. There is that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.

Although the Christian religion is not of the world, yet it is in the world, and requires worldly expenses or sacrifices to sustain its visibility, and all this was designed by the Author of the system for the benefit of those that embrace it.

We admit that God can (if he so designs) form Bibles in all the languages of the earth, authorize the wind to carry them to the places of their destination, and then by supernatural power educate men to read and understand them. He can, if he pleases, commission angels to publish the Gospel to the world. He can, if he pleases, carry on this work, and accomplish the object of the great work of redemption, without the instrumentality of his creatures, but he has otherwise determined. Glory be to His name, and thanksgiving forever, in that He has commissioned the church to send the Bible to all nations, and to preach the Gospel to every creature, and it costs money or worldly treasures to carry forward this work by human instrumentality. Preachers must have bread to eat, and raiment to put on; their families must have the necessities of life afforded them; the translators, printers, publishers and distributors of the Scriptures must be paid in worldly treasures. All these expenses must be sustained by the Christian church. Hence, we see that liberality is absolutely necessary in order to be instrumental in carrying on this work, and that no church can be strong and efficient without it.

We do not say that all feeble churches are covetous, but we do say, that if their members are much imbued with the liberality of Christ, they will not long be unprosperous. We do not say that covetousness is the only cause of poverty in the churches, but we do say that no covetous church can be long prosperous. The want of liberality naturally tends to poverty and inefficiency in matters of religion. We do believe that if all the members of all the churches were as liberal as they ought to be, and wise in the distribution of their liberality, the treasury of the Lord would be filled to overflowing, and but few, if any feeble churches unable to sustain a stated ministry of the Gospel among them.

4. Some churches are rendered poor and inefficient by the want of order and regularity among themselves. It will readily be admitted that a church cannot, or will not maintain consistent order for any great length of time, without officers appointed to superintend their pecuniary concerns. It may be said that this work belongs to the deacon or deacons, if the church have any. We admit this is the deacon's appropriate work, but the custom of the churches has rendered it necessary that a committee be appointed (appoint your deacons, if you please,) to solicit subscriptions, to raise funds, procure preaching, &c., &c. Many of our deacons have never been taught that this was a part of their work, and some that have are not willing to do it; but the church cannot prosper long without some person or persons to do these things. Some churches have no such arrangements, and if they have a preacher occasionally, a few individuals have to pay him, or he goes without pay; or it may be, they invite him to come again, with encouragement of being remunerated. In a month or two he comes again, and they make a contribution of which they are, or ought to be ashamed. They soon become discouraged, and say they are unable to procure preaching without assistance from missionary funds, &c., yet it may be there is 10, 15, 20 or 30,000 dollars of available property in the church, and it only needs wise arrangements to bring it to bear upon the necessary expenses of the visible cause. We may easily see the remedy for the inability of such churches.

5. Some churches decline and become impoverished for want of punctuality.
It is generally understood that punctuality is necessary to success in any rational employment whatever, whether of a worldly or a religious nature. When, therefore, the members of a Christian church fail of being punctual to their engagements or even to the encouragements they give, they put forth a debilitating influence upon the body; it is like taking blood from the system.

Suppose a people procure a pastor; they encourage him to believe that they will give him \$300 annually. The first year they fall short but little; the second they fail one third; after this they fail one half. Year after year passes away; the minister is embarrassed in his circumstances; he complains to the deacon; he is told that the members of the church have paid what they subscribed; there are some behind on subscription, a part of which may yet be collected, but our subscriptions have been much short of what you claim, for several years past. What shall I do? says the minister, I am owing two or three hundred dollars that must be paid soon.—The reply is—we have paid all that we are able; some that have subscribed will not pay, and you may be to blame some, as well as the people, for we never promised that we certainly would give you so much a year; we only promised to try to raise so much, but there was no individual or individuals responsible for the sum.

So much for ten, fifteen or twenty years' labor. Alas! for the poor minister and his creditors, the poor deacons and the poor church. Now, what will be the probable result of all this want of punctuality?

In the first place, we pity the poor pastor, and we most tenderly and affectionately blame him for indulging his people so long in the want of punctuality. No doubt he thought he was doing them a kindness, and that they would bestir themselves and pay him up by-and-by, for he knew they had the means, if they were willing to do it, and he hoped they were, but he was mistaken in his judgment, and has much injured, if not ruined himself, and contributed much to weaken the church and render it inefficient. We advise him to retire from his charge, and never injure another church by indulging its members in the want of punctuality.

As respects the church, we say she is on the decline. God has a controversy with her, and she cannot prosper without repentance.

It is no uncommon occurrence to find a church wishing to have preaching for the year, but the members are not punctual to have their arrangements made till it is too late to have a Sabbath school, and this also has a debilitating effect upon the church.

But we need not go on to multiply instances; the above facts, of too common occurrence, are sufficient to illustrate the principle, and show that the want of punctuality in the members of a Christian church cannot fail proportionally to weaken the body, and that such churches, in order to become prosperous, must become punctual. Let every thing be done in due season, remembering that if Christ had not made the atonement in season, the great plan of redemption would have been thwarted.

6. An inordinate thirst for novelty or something new has a direct tendency to debility in the Christian church.

1. It induces members to neglect the ordinary meetings of the church, and this, of course has a tendency to weaken the body, to discourage the minister, and enfeeble those who wish to hold up his hands.

2. It tends to corrupt the mind, and make it unstable, to debase the soul, and very much lessen, if not destroy its spirituality and heavenly-mindedness. Every one can see that all this cannot fail to weaken the energies of the church.

3. It naturally tends to break the cords of union in the church, separate very friends, and greatly weaken the moral power of the Christian community. If any doubt this, we ask them to tell us what it is that gives efficiency to error, and causes its rapid spread over the earth. Is it not love of novelty that sanctions the inventions of men? and prefers them to the word of God, the good old way. Is it not the love of novelty that gives currency to Mormonism, to Millerism, and all other isms that have been introduced since the apostolic age? Atrocious errors cannot gain a foothold where an inordinate love of novelty does not exist. The love of novelty is the prolific source of error.

4. It tends to separate the pastor from his people. If there is a minority of the lovers (not to say worshippers) of novelty in the church, their influence operates mostly against the pastor. It may be that he gives them a new sermon, whenever they hear him preach. They do not complain of the want of variety in his sermons, there is a sufficient variety of matter and manner to interest the lovers of truth. His voice, in the variety of its tones and gestures is music in their ears, while it is novel to them, but after a year or two, he utters no sound but what they have heard him utter before; his gestures are the same over and over, and they are tired of hearing him, and what next? Why, we must have a new minister. Mr. — has preached here long enough, our children begin to complain of hearing the same sound over and over again; he has lost his influence among our young people; but how shall we do?—the majority of the church are attached to the pastor, and wished not to give him up; and we are a minority. Says one, I will go to meeting where I can be fed; another, my children will not hear him; another, I shall withdraw my support from him: says a fourth, it is best to call a church meeting to prevent a division. The subject is agitated a few weeks or a month, a meeting is called, and in a few months the minister is dismissed and the church and society are confused, some rejoicing and some mourning. They have occasional preaching, some of the members are much pleased, and some are dissatisfied. They attempt to settle a pastor, but there is want of union. Month after month, and it may be years pass away before this object can be accomplished. The church grows weaker and weaker, but finally the difficulties are all hushed to silence—a pastor is settled, a few are pleased above measure, and the rest conclude to bear their own burden. This state of things remains a year or two, and there is another blow up, and the new pastor shares the fate of the former in a similar way. Many churches have thus been reduced from influence, and rendered enfeebled and almost destitute of moral power.

It is sometimes thought expedient for the pastor

of a church to use his influence to secure the labors of an evangelist for a few days or weeks, to assist him in a protracted effort for the benefit of his people. The object is attained; the evangelist preaches; the church is quickened, sinners are awakened, a revival follows, and it may be that a hundred or more are added to the church. This is as it should be; sinners are converted, and we rejoice in it, but the next we hear some of the members are saying, we must have a new minister; our pastor is not a revivalist. One and another say, I shall not aid in his support any longer—if the church will procure Mr. — who preached here in the revival, I will give more than I am able. This results in another removal of a pastor, and generally in another division that renders the church much weaker than before the revival, and thus Satan brings evil out of good.—We believe that in every instance where a people dismiss their pastor without sufficient reason, it has an injurious effect upon the church.

Churches may claim the right to choose their own ministers or pastors, and to dismiss them at pleasure. But if they do this without Divine direction, they will certainly do themselves a great injury, weaken their own body, and render it languid and inefficient.

We propose the following as the remedy for the above named evils:

Let the churches in all cases be more interested in the matter than in the manner of preaching. Let them prefer truth to novelty, and let them earnestly and perseveringly seek Divine direction in settling, continuing and dismissing a pastor. This remedy is sure.

7. Another source of evil is the want of wisdom in the location of a place of public worship.

There may be a majority of brethren in a remote part of the town, and a minority near the village—the majority rule and build a house for their own accommodation. They undertake to set up meeting. They procure preaching for a season, but soon fail for want of funds. The cause languishes, the brethren become discouraged, they apply to the missionary board for help to sustain preaching. The board examine the ground and conclude that the prospect of raising an assembly in so remote a place is too small and uncertain to venture funds for its promotion. We think of several churches under similar circumstances to the above. If they set up meeting but few will attend because but few live near. These churches will probably dwindle away and die unless the majority will yield to the minority, and move the location for public worship to a populous part of the town. We might name some feeble churches that have done this and are now in a prosperous condition.

8. Some churches are languishing and feeble for want of gospel discipline. Every member in the visible church that ought to be excluded is worse than a dead weight upon it.

What God says to ancient Israel may be applied to every church that does not exercise righteous discipline.

Neither will I be with you any more except ye destroy the accursed from among you. Josh. 7, 10-12.

The church can but languish and pine away when God's presence is withdrawn from her. She cannot stand before her spiritual foes so long as there is an Achan in it that may be searched out,—no, till it is done thoroughly—put away from among yourselves that wicked person. Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not according to the tradition ye received of us. Mark those that cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine ye have learned, and avoid them. If discipline is not sustained, the body must perish.—We find a general rule for dealing with offenders, stated by Christ in Matt. xviii. This may be, and ought to be followed, in most, if not in all cases of church discipline. But often, very often, have churches been rent and enfeebled by not complying with this rule. The willing hearer of a tattler's report hastily brings a difficulty before the church against a slandered member without any regard to the first or second step of labor. The church instead of sending him to take the first and second step according to Matt. xviii, appoint a committee to search out the matter and thus the difficulty is received into the church without observing any rule, and is likely to be carried on in the same way. The church is involved in a long serious difficulty that issues in a division of the body. Whereas if the rule had been observed it probably would not have come before the church at all.

This is one case out of a thousand that might be mentioned. Let the rule be tenderly, affectionately, and yet promptly observed, and the church will never be injured by discipline, but always benefitted. It is always safe to obey Christ. Finally, The want of humility often contributes to the feebleness and inefficiency of churches. The people of Israel wanted a king that they might appear splendid like the nation around them. This often proved an obstacle in the way of their prosperity. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall," but before honor, is humility. Some churches are without a meeting-house because they are not able to build an elegant one;—some are without a minister because they are not able to support one of popular talents. The conference-meeting is not sustained because the brethren think they cannot speak so as to gain applause, and the prayer-meeting fails for the same reason. This is the reason why the church cannot sustain a meeting on Lord's days, without a preacher.—All this is the effect of that pride which is the opposite of humility, and tends to spiritual poverty. If a church is favored with preaching a stated part of the time, it seems to be almost in vain, unless the members will keep up meetings the other part of the time, using their own gifts among themselves, to edify one another. We believe that many churches are brought low, and unable to rise, because they will not wait on the Lord in the use of such gifts

as he has bestowed upon them, and thus they are enfeebled for want of humility. Let the churches, then, instead of being ashamed of the ability God hath given, humbly use it for Him, and He will give more, and thus they will more generally become prosperous and useful.

For the Christian Secretary.

"That Big Gun."

I have heard several most thrilling discourses, growing out of the solemn and terrible voice of Providence, lately uttered at Washington. That voice, speaking in thunder to the nation, was indeed a most affecting lesson on the vanity of ambition for fame and power; on the brevity of life; the utter uncertainty of earthly possessions; and the priceless value of that religion, which alone can afford consolation under heavy trials, and secure everlasting peace, durable riches, glory, and happiness. And I cannot doubt but that a wonderful working Providence may have designed it for the awakening and saving of many thousands of souls.

But I must confess my surprise at learning nothing from the pulpit, that throne of moral power, in reference to war. "That big gun," weighing ten tons, was a proud engine, a boasted representative of war; it was paraded and fired at that fatal moment in honor of war; the whole display was fitted to enkindle a flame of enthusiasm in reference to war. And when that terrible engine recoils upon its owners, and in an instant lays low in death some of the most honored of the nation, I cannot but regard the event as a loud remonstrance from "the God of Peace," against the custom of civilized and Christian nations settling their disputes by a resort to mutual conflagration, plunder, and butchery.

Why, how do wise moralists improve other awful lessons of Providence? If a man drop dead in the ball-room, do they fail to decant on the vanity of worldly amusements? Yet these are not designed to kill. Should some most valuable lives be lost in a horse-race, or through the intemperance of a steamboat or railcar conductor, though death was not intended, would not the occasion of it be publicly denounced? Why, then, when the Capitol is shrouded in sackcloth, when the highest seats of power are made desolate through the instrument prepared for others, should there not be from the pulpit a most solemn rebuke of the war spirit, whose very object is to kill men by thousands and tens of thousands?

I recollect the bitter, though well-merited sarcasm of Voltaire upon just such inconsistency: "Ye bungling soul-physicians!" exclaims the arch infidel, "to bellow for an hour or more against a few flea-bites, and not say a word about this horrid distemper, which tears us to pieces! Burn your books, ye moralizing philosophers! Of what avail are humanity, benevolence, meekness, temperance, pity, when half a pound of lead shatters my body; when I expire at the age of twenty, under pains unspeakable; when my eyes, at their last opening, see my native town all in a blaze, and the last sounds I hear are the shrieks and groans of women and children expiring amidst the ruins!"

ERASMUS.

From the N. Y. Observer.

"In Quest of Vacancies."

A clergyman called on me the other day, and introduced himself. In the course of conversation I asked which way he was traveling. He said he was not going in any particular direction, he was "in quest of vacancies." He had been in quest of them for a year or two, and seemed to be as little likely to find one to suit him, or one that he would suit, as he did when he first set out.

Some years ago there came to my house a wandering clergyman, and made known a similar errand. I gave him all the information in my possession, but he seemed quite at home where he was and stayed. The day wore away, and I asked him to spend the night. This was as good as an invitation to spend the next day and the next, for he appeared in no haste to depart, until my "better half" began to suggest to me that he should like a "vacancy" in the parlor, and I found it necessary to jog my brother's memory on the subject of his prospective duties, and, after a week's sojourn under our roof, he took his leave.

It is my fortune, or my misfortune to know another clergyman who has never been settled in the ministry, but who lives from year to year, by wandering from place to place, getting a little money now and then as an occasional supply, and fastening himself upon this acquaintance and that, wearing out the patience and eating out the substance of poor ministers, and yet apparently as easy about the future as if he were a permanent and useful pastor. He has made himself so disagreeable by his untimely and interminable visits that his brethren are disgusted with him, and their wives would almost as soon hear of the plague coming as this unwelcome guest.

Is there no remedy for these grievances? There are "vacancies" enough for all and more than all the ministers of the gospel now in the field. And the variety of our American population is so great, that every variety of talent is required to meet the demand. There can be no doubt that there are places enough to require the services of all the qualified preachers now in commission, and the demand increases faster than the supply. But the secret of the difficulty in the case of the wandering preachers of whom I have spoken is this—they are not qualified to preach the gospel; they mistake their calling when they went into the ministry, and they ought to seek, even now, some other department of labor in which to glorify God. It would be an act of kindness to tell them so frankly, and if I had in this discharging my duty to the man I have alluded to above, on his next visitation at my house, I believe, or fear, that my wife will supply my lack of service.

PENNSYLVANIA.

They may recommend measures, cannot enforce them.
worthy of remark, that these councils originate in the peculiar exigency of the case, and disband immediately when the case, their advice is sought, is disposed of, among Baptists no standing councils or, to adjust church difficulties. In the calling these councils there is nothing The usual method is for the church, to unite in requesting several sister meet with it by their pastor and one brethren, to deliberate on the cause of duty or embarrassment. But it is common that an ex parte council becomes In that case, the person or persons after having made suitable efforts to church to agree upon the calling of a council, and failed to effect their wish, proceed to call an ex parte council, from the whole case may be submitted even then the church is to be no meeting of the ex parte council, and to represent itself by delegates on n. If the church is thought to have council so express their belief, and give in the premises as may be deemed Most generally a settlement of the more ensues; or at least, a mutual council, upon whose advice is commonly con-

method of licensing and ordaining. This whole matter is confined to the churches. It is held that no church, churches, has any right to dictate to churches on this subject. With is vested the supreme right of choosing officers, and calling into exercise its Still, while this right is conceded to it, it is claimed as a ground of greater imposition, and as a matter of neighboring ministers and churches consulted as to the expediency of calling to ordination any one of its Little more, however, is expected on than that the candidate be requested to gifts in the pulpits of several of the es, and their general approbation be fore the full license is granted. Or, considerable time elapses between the a candidate to preach, and his induction duties of a pastor by ordination; so nt opportunities of understanding the nd qualifications of the candidate, are the several pastors and brethren who ed upon to take part in the exercises ation. Although the Baptists have erred somewhat from the precipitation their churches on this point, they are of their system of induction into the ministry. They have such a dread en of clerical usurpations, and priest-on, that they look with suspicion upon deviation from the principle of church ry, in regard to the election of all ers.

method of ordination, it is sufficient when a church has called a man to and his acceptance has been duly agn proceeds to invite a council, in the or, to deliberate on the propriety of it wishes by a public recognition of it with appropriate solemnities. If concur in the propriety of proceeding ation, a time is set apart for the pub- and persons are chosen of their num- a sermon on the occasion, to offer prayer and lay on hands, to deliver arge to the candidate, to extend to of fellowship, and to address the ongregation.

method of transacting church business. by virtue of his office the moderator ng, and presides during the transac- business of the church, except what himself. In such a case, or in case, it is proper for the senior deacon me one who may be chosen, protem- de. All questions are decided by a of the brethren, except such as re- ception of members. Here the vote be unanimous. The rules common- ly deliberative bodies, govern the ber business meetings. The assent is expected in the reception of mem- all ordinary business they usually whatever.

worship. Public worship is usually the pastor or officiating minister, in manner as in Presbyterian and al churches. Formerly, laymen on, after the sermon, to take part, and this practice still continues nt. Written discourses are more they were in former times.

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Poetry.

For the Secretary.

My Mother's Grave.

BY J. L. SCOTT.

The golden sunlight streams around,
The still breeze fragrance bring,
The painted birds with joyous sound
Flit by on swift-revolving wing.
Here is a mother's place of rest:
For many a year will she recline—
A dove within her peaceful nest,
Till the morn of resurrection shine.

My brother stands beside me here,
He from a distant land has come,
And now we meet where memories dear
Recall the thrills of love and home.
Oh, how the tide of time rolls back!
As fond we gaze upon this spot,
The youthful blood renews its track,
And scenes arise long since forgot.

Here kneel we on this lonely green,
Beside the heaving turf, which hides
The precious form of her, now seen
Where never-ending love abides.
Our tears are flowing, and obscure
The simple stone above her grave,
While hearts of affection pure
Our hearts with cherished fondness lave.

Descend, Oh sacred spirit now!
Breathe gentle thy sons, a blessing power!
Dear, gentle mother, as we bow,
Our souls grow thrice, earth's vanished flower!
Thy pious precepts cherished are,
Thy faith in Christ we emulate,
Thy spotless life yet be our star
To guide us through this troubled state.

How many a fervent prayer didst thou,
When toiling through this vale of tears,
Pour for thy erring child who now
Would fly where heaven's portals rear!
Oh, sainted mother, rest so dear,
And now—though I am seared and riven
By the harsh world and urgent care—
Still dear!—may we three meet in heaven!

My brother by the dearest tie
That now on earth exists for me,
Oh, let us by our mother lie,
When we have passed life's stormy sea!—
Though duty's wand may point us far
To roam apart in diverse lands,
Thou wandering 'neath the Southern star,
And I o'er Greenland's frozen sands.
We meet once more, and o'er this sod—
The grave of her whose heart we share,
Firm, hand in hand, before our God,
Here pledge for each a brother's care—
A brother's love and lasting truth,
Which other bonds shall not destroy—
To urn within our hearts, a youth
Of changeless love, a constant joy!

Miscellaneous.

[From the Young Ladies' Friend.]

The Duel.

A THRILLING NARRATIVE.

BY THE EDITOR OF ZION'S HERALD AND JOURNAL.

The Rev. Mr. M—— was a veteran itinerant preacher of the West. He related many incidents of his itinerant life. Among them, was the following, which I give in his own words as much as possible:

About four miles from N—— is an extensive grove, well known as the scene of several fatal duels. As I passed it one morning, on my way to my appointment in that town, I perceived a horse and vehicle among the trees, guarded by a solitary man, who appeared to be the driver. My suspicions were immediately excited, but I rode on. About a mile beyond, I met another carriage, containing four persons besides the driver, and hastening with all speed.

My fears were confirmed, and I could scarcely doubt that another scene of blood was about to be enacted in those quiet solitudes. What was my duty in the case? I knew too well the tenacity of those fictitious and absurd sentiments of honor which prevailed in that section of the country, and which give to the duel a character of exalted chivalry, to suppose that my interference could be successful; but I thought it was my duty to rebuke the sin, if I could not prevent it; and in the name of the Lord I would do it. I immediately wheeled about, and returned with the utmost speed to the grove.

The second carriage had arrived and was fastened to a tree. I rode up, and attached my horse near it, and throwing the driver a piece of silver, requested him to guard him. While treading my way into the forest, my thoughts were intensely agitated to know how to present myself most successfully. The occasion admitted no delay. I hastened on, and soon emerged into an oval space surrounded on all sides by dense woods. At the opposite extremity stood the principals, their boots drawn over their pantaloons, their coats, vests and hats off, handkerchiefs tied over their heads, and tightly belting their waists. A friend and a surgeon were conversing with each, while the seconds were about midway between them, arranging the dreadful conflict. One of the principals, the challenged, appeared but twenty years of age. His countenance was singularly expressive of sensibility, but also of cool determination. The other had a stout ruffian-like bearing—a countenance easy, but sinister and heartless, and he seemed impatient to wreak his vengeance upon his antagonist.

I advanced immediately to the seconds, and declared at once my character and object. "Gentlemen," said I, "excuse my intrusion. I am a minister of the gospel. I know not the merits of this quarrel, but both my heart and office require me to bring about a reconciliation between the parties, if possible."

"Sir," replied one of them, "the utmost has been done to effect it, without effect, and this is no place to make further attempt."

"Under any circumstances, in any place, gentlemen," I replied, "it is appropriate to prevent murder; and such, in the sight of God, is the deed you are aiding. It must not be, gentlemen."

In the name of the law, which prohibits it—in the name of your friends, the principals—in the name of God, who looks down upon you in this place—I beseech you, prevent it at once; at least, wash your own hands from the blood of these men. Retire from the field, and refuse to assist in their mutual murder."

My emphatic remonstrance had a momentary effect. They seemed disposed to come to terms if I could get the concurrence of the principals.

I passed immediately to the oldest of them—His countenance became more repulsive as I approached him. It was deeply pitted with the small-pox, and there was upon it the most cold-blooded leer I ever saw on a human face. He had given the challenge—I besought him by every consideration of humanity and morality to recall it. I referred to the youth and inexperience of his antagonist—the conciliatory disposition of the seconds—the fearful consequences to his soul if he should fail, and the withering remorse which must ever follow him, if he should kill the young man. He evidently thirsted for the blood of his antagonist, but observing that his friend and the surgeon seconded my reasoning, he replied with undissembled reluctance, that he gave the challenge for sufficient reasons, and that if those reasons were removed, he might recall it, but not otherwise.

I passed to the other. I admonished him of the sin he was about to perpetrate. I referred to his probable domestic relations and the allusion touched his heart. He suddenly wiped a tear from his eyes. "Yes, sir," said he, "there are hearts which would break if they knew I was here." I referred to my conversation with the seconds and the other principal, and remarked that nothing was now necessary to effect a reconciliation but a retraction of the words which had offended his antagonist. "Sir," he replied, planting his foot firmly on the ground, and assuming a look which would have been sublime in a better cause—"Sir, I have uttered nothing but the truth respecting that man, and though I sink into the grave, I will not sanction his villainous character by a recantation."

I reasoned with increased vehemence, but no appeal to his judgment or his heart could shake his desperate firmness, and I left him with tears which I have doubt he would have shared under other circumstances. What could I do further? I appealed again to the first principal, but he spurned me with a cool smile. I flew to the seconds, and entreated, them on any terms, to adjust the matter and save the shedding of blood. But they had already measured the ground, and were ready to place the principals. "Gentlemen," said I, "the blood of this dreadful deed be upon your souls. I have acquitted myself of it." I then proceeded from the area towards my horse.

What were my emotions as I turned away in despair? What, thought I, must this duel proceed? Is there no expedient to prevent it? In a few minutes, one or both of these men may be in eternity, accused with blood guiltiness! Can I not pluck them as brands from the burning—My spirit was in a tumult of anxiety; in a moment, and just as the principals were taking their positions, I was again on the ground. Standing on the line between them, I exclaimed, "In the name of God, I adjure you to stop this murderous work. It must not, it cannot proceed."

"Knock him down," cried the elder duelist, with a fearful imprecation.

"Sir," exclaimed the younger, "I appreciate your motives, but I demand of you to interfere no more with our arrangements."

The seconds seized me by the arms, and compelled me to retire. But I warned them at every step. Never before did I feel so deeply the value and hazard of the human soul. My remarks were without effect, except on one of the friends of the younger principal. "This is a horrible place," said he, "I cannot endure it," and he turned with me from the scene.

"Now then for it," cried one of the seconds, as they returned. "Take your places." Shudderingly I hastened my pace to escape the result.

"One—two"—and the next sound was lost in the explosion of the pistols! "O God!" shrieked a voice of agony. I turned round. The younger principal, with his hand to his face, shrieked again, quivered, and fell to the ground! I rushed to him. With one hand he clung to the earth, the fingers penetrated the sod, while with the other, he grasped his left jaw, which was shattered with a horrid wound. I turned with faintness from the sight. The charge had passed through the left side of the mouth, crossing the teeth, severing the jugular and passing out at the back part of the head, laying open entirely, one side of the face and neck. In this ghastly wound, amid blood and shattered teeth, had he fixed his grasp with a tenacity which could not be moved. Bleeding profusely and convulsive with agony, he lay for several minutes, the most frightful spectacle I had ever witnessed. The countenance of the spectators expressed a conscious relief when it was announced by the surgeon that death had ended the scene. Meanwhile the murderer and his party had left the ground.

One of the company was despatched on my horse to communicate the dreadful news to the family. The dead young man was cleansed from his blood, and borne immediately to his carriage. I accompanied it. It stopped before a small but elegant house. The driver ran to the door and rapped. An elderly lady opened it, with frantic agitation, at the instant when we were lifting the ghastly remains from the carriage. She gazed for a moment as if thunder-struck, and fell fainting in the doorway. A servant removed her into the parlor, and, as we passed with the corpse into a rear room, I observed her extended on a sofa, as pale as her hapless son.

We placed the corpse on the table, with the stiffened hand still grasping the wound, when a lady neatly attired in white, and with a face delicately beautiful, rushed, frantically into the room, and threw her arms around it weeping with uncontrollable emotion, and exclaiming with an agony of feeling, "my brother! my dear, dear brother! Can it be—O, can it be?"

The attendants tore her away. I shall never forget the look of utter wretchedness she wore as they led her away—her eyes dissolved in tears, and her bosom stained with her brother's blood.

The unfortunate young man was of New Eng-

land origin. He had settled in the town of N——, where his business had prospered so well, that he invited his mother and sister to reside with him. His home, endeared by gentleness and love, and every temporal comfort, was a scene of unalloyed happiness;—but in an evil hour he yielded to a local and absurd prejudice—a sentiment of honor falsely so called, which his education should have taught him to despise. He was less excusable than his malicious murderer, for he had more light and better sentiments. This one step ruined him and his happy family. He was interred the next day, with the regrets of the whole community.

His poor mother never left the house till she was carried to her grave, to be laid by the side of her son. She died after a delirious fever of two weeks' duration, throughout which she ceased not to implore the attendants, with tears, to preserve her hapless son from the hands of assassins, who, she imagined, kept him concealed for their murderous purpose. His sister still lives, but poor and broken hearted. Her beauty and energies have been wasted by sorrow, and she is dependent on others for her daily bread.

When we consider how many hearts of mothers, sisters and wives, have been made to bleed by this cruel and deadly custom, shall we not invoke the influence of women to abolish it? It rests upon an accidental state of public opinion, a fictitious sentiment of honor. Whose influence is more effectual in correcting or promoting such sentiments than woman's? Human laws have failed to correct it, but her influence can do it. Let her, then, disdain the duelist as stained with blood. Let her repel him from her society as one who has wrongly escaped the gallows. Let her exert all the benign influence of her virtues and her charms to bring into disgrace the murderous sentiment which tolerates it, and it cannot be long before the distinction between the duelist and the assassin will cease.

The National Church an Incubus.

The perils of the British nation, we firmly believe are to be traced, principally to the existence of the church establishment. It produces many of the evils under which the country groans; and it obstructs the progress of religious principle, which would be the most effectual corrective of others. It is a machine for the maintenance of the forms of godliness; but the power of godliness is beyond its capabilities; the form, however, deceives, and too often prevents the power being sought or valued. It engages the patronage of the princes, nobles, and legislators; and renders them insensible of the claims of vital religion,—that religion which "working effectually" promotes universal justice, benevolence and piety.

In the number of the Westminster Review just published, facts are asserted, and declared to be incontrovertible, which will illustrate and confirm our views. In an article on the results of the session, it is stated that a proposal made in 1837 to procure the removal from workhouses into district industrial schools of the orphan children was frustrated by the heads of the clergy, who were sounded on the subject, and as soon as they understood that the secular government of these schools was not to rest with them, but jointly with the poor law commissioners and the committee of privy council on education, an intimation was given that the clauses of the proposed bill relative to this object could be opposed,—that the project therefore has fallen to the ground, although three times brought forward and discussed in the House of Commons, and on one occasion emphatically supported by Sir Robert Peel;—and that the only obstacle to a liberal scheme of national education is the deliberate resolutions of the bishops that no scheme of national education shall receive their sanction which does not leave the appointment of the schoolmaster in the hands of the clergy.—Bap. Mag.

For the Christian Secretary.

New Post Office Bill.

The new post-office bill, reported with amendments to the Senate, proposes to fix letter postage at five cents for any distance under one hundred miles, and at ten cents for over one hundred miles. This looks accommodating, only from the fact that it is so much less than the heavy tax imposed for half a century. It is, for under one hundred miles, nearly three times, and for over one hundred miles, nearly six times the British postage! The same bill deprives all editors, and of course all their mail subscribers, of the important privilege hitherto enjoyed, of having payments sent free, through postmasters;—thus aiming a heavy blow against the general circulation of knowledge. To this, however, there would be no objection, provided letter postage were reduced to three cents, as it might be, were all franking abolished.

The bill, moreover, imposes on all pamphlets, magazines, and even newspapers not published at short, stated intervals, of not more than one week, a tax of two and a half cents for each copy of no greater weight than one ounce, sent any distance not exceeding one hundred miles; five cents for any greater distance, and one cent additional for each additional ounce of the weight of every such pamphlet, magazine, matter or thing which may be transmitted through the mail, whatever be the distance!—While the same bill also imposes heavy penalties for sending, over mail routes, by any other modes of conveyance, "magazines, pamphlets or newspapers," if intended for immediate distribution to subscribers or others.

Now there are very few magazines that do not weigh more than one ounce, and very few are published as often as once a week. The consequence of this law will be, therefore, the killing outright of the agricultural, legal, medical, literary, religious and miscellaneous periodicals, which now form so great a portion of the reading of our countrymen, and which bring the choice results of expensive treatises within the reach of the humblest mechanic and farmer.

But even this is not the worst of this anti-republican bill. It provides, like the old law, that, during the whole year, every member of Congress may receive free, any number of letters, papers, or packets, and may send free, five letters or packets daily, besides any amount of pamphlets or documents Congress may choose to publish; however enormous the expense to the public of printing and employing numerous clerks in fol-

ding, as well as employing many hours of their own time in franking and also heavily burdening the mails in carrying the same throughout the nation;—thus virtually giving to themselves the privilege of conciliating for a new election, at the public expense, just so many of their constituents as they may choose to supply with these apparent gratuities; for which in reality every person paying postage is taxed! And this tax amounts to many millions.

Here then is the ignoble secret of the high rates of letter and pamphlet postage proposed! The British government, to the shame of our boasted republicanism, have had the magnanimity to abolish entirely their franking privilege. And for several years past, their mail, carrying letters throughout the United Kingdom for a penny, and all newspapers for nothing, has cleared over all expenses, the average sum of about three millions of dollars annually! While, according to the statements of the Postmaster General, our public guardians at Washington have been franking (besides vast numbers of letters, for themselves and others,) upwards of four millions of pamphlets or documents, in three weeks, (during which time an accurate account was kept as the ground of a general estimate,) weighing upwards of 179 tons!

Plain common sense men can make an estimate of the vast number and expense of teams it would require every three weeks of the long session of Congress, for transporting these 179 tons—for the most part useless, except for selfish or party purposes!

And let the common people remember that they are the sovereigns of this republic, and responsible for its laws, whether good or bad. Let them at once forward from every village petitions something like the following, and their wishes will be regarded by those they have elected:

"To the Hon. Senate and House of Representatives in Congress assembled: The undersigned respectfully request that you will reduce letter postage, throughout the United States, to three cents, and newspapers and pamphlets in due and equal proportion, and abolish entirely the franking privilege."

Dancing Christians.

MESSENGERS. Editors, I have been pained at the recital of several instances of professors of religion, dancing at large and fashionable parties. At two of them, ministers of the gospel were present. Dancing was of course put off till late, expecting the clergymen would leave, but finding the time was passing, and that the clergymen were not likely to leave, the gentleman of the house proposed or suggested the matter of dancing to the brethren, when no objection was made—from what motive I know not. Some of the members of Dr. ———'s church, connected with one of the Presbyteries in this city, not only justifying dancing at parties, and dance themselves whenever they have an opportunity, but insist that all parents ought to send their children to dancing schools.

Now, Messrs. Editors, you recollect the command, "whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we should do all to the glory of God." I would ask in great affection, "is all this for the glory of God?" Do these persons engage in, and justify these things with a view to promote the good of souls, or the honor of Christ? Is not the dancing party calculated to draw the mind off from spiritual things, and bring barrenness on the soul? Our Saviour said that for every idle word that men should speak, they should give an account at the judgment, how much more then for time dissipated at such places of vain amusement and attraction. We see no example from such holy men as Baxter, Edwards, Taylor and Payson; all their influence is quite on the other side.

—N. Y. Evangelist.

From the N. Y. Observer.

Anecdote of Owen.

The origin of Dr. Owen's great practical work on the Forgiveness of Sin, or Psalm 130, a new and beautiful edition of which has just been issued by the American Tract Society, was related by the doctor in the following circumstances:

"A young man, who afterwards became a minister, being under serious impressions, came to him for counsel. In the course of conversation the doctor asked, 'Pray, in what manner do you think to go to God?' 'Through the Mediator, sir,' said the young man. To which Dr. Owen replied, 'That is easily said; but it is another thing to go to God through the Mediator than what many who use the expression are aware of. I myself preached some years when I had but very little, if any experimental acquaintance with access to God through Christ, until the Lord was pleased to visit me with sore affliction, by which I was brought to the mouth of the grave, and under which my soul was oppressed with horror and darkness. But God graciously relieved my spirit by a powerful application of Psalm cxxx. 4. 'There is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared;' from whence I received special instruction, peace and comfort in drawing near to God through the Mediator, and I preached thereupon immediately after my recovery."

None who seriously and prayerfully read this treatise, will fail to discover the grounds and the appropriateness of the above appeal to an inquiring youth, the rich sources from which the author has drawn Divine instruction, and its adaptation to the wants of every perishing soul.

Prayerful Importunity.

Our Lord thrice repeated in the garden his petition for the removal of his bitter cup. He went to God thrice upon the same account. Christians should not be discouraged though they have sought God once and again, and received no answer of peace.—Christ was not answered in the thing he desired, yet he was meekly submissive to the will of God. God may not answer us in the thing we desire, but an answer will be given in his own good time—such as infinite tenderness and wisdom shall direct. A prayer sent up in faith, according to the will of God, cannot be lost.

Is there a Christian inclined to cease praying because he has asked once and again and no answer has been received? Has he prayed with the fervency and repetition which the Saviour used? If he was not answered in that he desired, will he complain if God deals with him as he dealt with Jesus Christ?

If we are really to effect any thing by our prayers, their character must be greatly changed. How unlike the prayers of Christ are our cold and formal offerings! How much better adapted have asked God to revive his work: when you will see that it was a very cold prayer that was offered. You have asked God to convert your children: when disease has brought them to the borders of the grave, you will see that your prayers and efforts for their salvation were imperfect. Study the prayers of Christ—follow his example if you would have your prayers prevailing.—Y. Evan.

THE DOMESTIC ANGELS.—Women have been called angels, in love tales and sonnets, till we have learned almost to think of angels as little better than women. Yet a man who knows a woman thoroughly, and loves her truly—and there are women who have been so known and loved—will find, after a few years, that his relish for the grosser pleasures is lessened, and that he is grown into the fondness of the intellectual and refined without an effort, and almost unawares. He has been led on to virtue through his pleasures; and the delights of the eye, and the gentle play of that passion which is the most inward in our nature, and which keeps much of its character amid the concerns of life, have held him in a kind of spiritualized existence; he shares his very being with one who, a creature of this world, and with something of the world's frailties, is—
"With something of an angel light."

With all the sincerity of a companionship of feeling, cares, sorrows and enjoyments, her presence is as the presence of a purer being, and there is that in her nature, which seems to bring him nearer to a better world. She is, as it were, linked to angels; and in his exalted moments, he feels himself held by the same tie.—Richard H. Dana.

DEATH OF CHILDREN.—Leighton thus wrote on hearing of the death of a child:

"Sweet thing, and he so quickly laid to sleep? Happy he! Though we shall have no more the pleasure of his lisping and laughing, he shall have no more the pain of crying, nor of being sick, nor of dying. Tell my dear sister, that she is now so much more akin to the other world; and this will be quickly passed to us all. John is but gone an hour or two to bed, as children used to do, and we are undressing to follow. And the more we put off the love of this present world, and all things superfluous, beforehand, we shall have the less to do when we lie down."

A CLINCHER.—"Does not Mr. N., our neighbor, belong to the church?" asked a youth of me one evening, as I sat musing upon a seat in Temperance Hall. "I hear him praying often, and particularly on the Sabbath day. Our yard joins his, and I hear him praying for the conversion of sinners, and that God would prosper every means for the prosperity and happiness of the world." "Yes, my little fellow," says I, "he belongs to the church, and I suppose is a good man." "Well, then," says the boy, "I want you to tell me how he can be a Christian and sell rum, which nearly took you off to the drunkard's grave, and many more Washingtonians, who are now reformed! Does he wish you all to go back to drinking, and does he want all of us boys to buy and drink rum as our fathers have done, and thus perpetuate the curse of his trade to our latest posterity? If that is religion, it is a far different kind than we read of in the Bible, or hear at our Sunday schools, and is just such religion as I never want, any how."

That was a "clinch." I knew my neighbor to be a member of the church and a trafficker in rum, but I did not know before that children were so sharp-sighted, and capable of such powers of reason and reflection.—Selected from the Lutheran Observer.

TEMPERANCE PRINCIPLES IN CHURCHES.—It appears to be an established principle among Baptist churches of the missionary order in our State, that no one engaged in retailing ardent spirits shall be retained in fellowship.—Christian Index, Ga.

SIGN OF AN ANTI-MISSIONARY BAPTIST LADY IN GEORGIA.—So notorious is the fact that missionary Baptists do not tolerate the use of intoxicating liquors, that an Antimissionary Baptist lady, riding from meeting with a much valued brother, a domestic missionary in Western Georgia, replied to a remark relative to the division between the Missionary and Antimissionary Baptists, "Well, I'm an Antimissionary; I drink my gin, and I don't care who knows it,"—thus identifying the drinking of gin with being an Antimissionary.—Id.

MAKING NOTHING OF IT.—A clergyman was one day stating to a brother minister how much labor it was for him to write a sermon to his mind. To which the other replied—"I can write one in a week and make nothing of it." He is the only preacher who could say as much.

EXCUSE FOR NOT GOING TO CHURCH.—There is no excuse so trivial, that will not pass upon some men's conscience to excuse their attendance on the public worship of God. Some are so unfortunate as to be indisposed on the Lord's day, and think nothing so unwholesome as the air of a church; others have their affairs so oddly contrived, as to be always unluckily prevented by trivial, as—With some it is a great mark of wit and deep understanding to stay at home on Sunday, others again discover strange fits of laziness, that seize them particularly on that day and confine them to their beds. Others are absent out of mere contempt of religion. And, lastly, there are not a few who look upon it as a day of rest, and therefore claim the privilege of their cattle, to keep the Sabbath by eating, drinking and sleeping after the toil and labor of the week. Now in all this the worst circumstance is, that these persons are such whose companies are most required, and who stand most in need of a physician.—Dean Swift.

CHARLES ROBINSON, —Attorney and Counsellor at Law, Solicitor in Chancery, Notary Public Commissioner for the States of New York and Maine—Also agent for the North American and Hudson Insurance Companies of New York. Office, corner Church and State streets, New Haven.

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This is the Arsenal. From floo

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But from their silent pipes no au

Startles the villages with stran

Ah! what a sound will rise, how

When the Death-Angel touch

What loud lament and dismal mo

Will mingle with their awful

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The cries of agony, the endless

Which, through the ages that ha

In long reverberations reach

On helm and harness rings the S

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And Aztec priests upon their m

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The bursting shell, the gateway

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